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|---|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
| 10/825,452 | 04/15/2004 | Yifeng Wu | 200312575 | 8319 |
| 22879 7590 04/30/2008 HEWLETT PACKARD COMPANY P O BOX 272400, 3404 E. HARMONY ROAD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ADMINISTRATION FORT COLLINS, CO 80527-2400 | | | | |
| EXAMINER RILEY, MARCUS T | | | | |
| ART UNIT | | PAPER NUMBER | | |
| 2625 | | | | |
| NOTIFICATION DATE | | DELIVERY MODE | | |
| 04/30/2008 | | ELECTRONIC | | |

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/825,452

Applicant(s)

WU ET AL.

Examiner

MARCUS T. RILEY

Art Unit

2625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04/15/2004.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 April 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/ISD)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 04/15/2004
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. **Claims 1, 3, 13, 16-18, 19, 29 & 31** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oyumi (US 7,301,677 B2 hereinafter, Oyumi '677) in combination with Enomoto (US 7,304,761 hereinafter, Enomoto '761).

Regarding claim 1; Oyumi '677 discloses a printing control system, comprising: a plurality of printing units (*"It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an image forming system, an image distribution apparatus, and an image forming method that are capable of making uniform in size printed images, which should originally be the same in size, between transfer sheets on which the images have been printed by a plurality of printers having different functions and capabilities when enough time has elapsed after fixing..."* column 2, lines 17-24); an image source providing a print job comprising a plurality of images (*"It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an image forming system, an image distribution apparatus, and an image forming method that are capable of making uniform in size printed images, which should originally be the same in size, between transfer sheets on which the images have been printed by a plurality of printers having different functions and capabilities when enough time has elapsed after fixing..."* column 2, lines 17-24); and a system processing unit, wherein the

system processing unit is configured to receive the plurality of images in the print job from the image source (*"FIG. 10 is a flow chart showing an image forming process carried out by the image forming system in FIG. 1, including processing for printing and reading mark images, and correcting the image size when printing original images based on integration data by respective printers..."* column 6, lines 1-5); calculate an image histogram for each image in the print job (*"On the other hand, to create the density histogram data for the sub-scanning direction, as shown in FIG. 8B, the flip-flop 813 is initialized (cleared) in response to a reset signal RES2, and a read modify write operation is repeated for respective pixels constituting each line in the main scanning direction based on image data obtained from one mark image in response to a write signal RAMWR1 and data direction switching signal RAMDIR, and integration values of density data on respective pixels arranged on the same line in the sub-scanning direction are calculated and stored in the RAM 803."* column 11, lines 12-23).

Oyumi '677 does not expressly disclose determining a similarity of the images in the print job by comparing the calculated histograms; classifying the images into classes based on the comparison; and sending each of the classes of images to a respective one of the printing units.

Enomoto '761 discloses determining a similarity of the images in the print job by comparing the calculated histograms (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value*

density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan.” column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5); classifying the images into classes based on the comparison (“More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan.” column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5); and sending each of the classes of images to a respective one of the printing units (“In the printing with film processing, the parameter integration subsection 76 transmits the image processing information of the frame of interest and the calculated image characteristic quantity and the like received from the setup subsection 70 to the recording means 78 after processing for the frame is determined.” column 11, lines 30-35).

Oyumi ‘677 and Enomoto ‘761 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (“The present invention relates to a technical field of a print system for outputting a print (photograph) on which an image photographed on a film [or an image photographed by a digital camera] is reproduced, and in particular, to a data retrieval method allowing an image on a print made on the occasion of film processing and that on a reprint to suitably match each other in such a print system.” Enomoto ‘761 at column 1, lines 6-12).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi ‘677 by adding determining a similarity of the images in the print job by comparing the calculated histograms; classifying the images into

classes based on the comparison; and sending each of the classes of images to a respective one of the printing units as taught by Enomoto '761.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to provide a data retrieval method to enable the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint which meets the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image (*"...the present invention has an object of providing a data retrieval method enabling the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint meeting the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image."* Enomoto '761 at column 3, lines 19-25).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi '677 with Enomoto '761 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

Regarding claim 3; Oyumi '677 discloses wherein the plurality of printing units includes at least a first printing unit and a second printing unit, wherein the number of classes equals the number of printing units and includes at least a first class and a second class, and wherein the first class of images is printed on the first printing unit and the second class of images is printed on the second printing unit (*"Then, before distributing image data on an original image to be printed by the printer n to the printer n, the host server 303 enlarges an image to be printed on the first side of the transfer sheet at a magnification of $R/RnH1$ in the main scanning direction and at a magnification of $R/RnV1$ in the sub-scanning direction, and enlarges an image to be*

printed on the second side of the transfer sheet at a magnification of $R/RnH2$ in the main scanning direction and at a magnification of $R/RnV2$ in the sub-scanning direction (step S1108). Then, the host server 303 distributes the enlarged image data to the respective printers, and the printers form the images onto transfer sheets (step S1109)." column 12, lines 43-54).

Regarding claim 13; Oyumi '677 discloses wherein the number of core classes is equal to the number of printing units in the system ("*As a result, if original images are printed on the first and second sides of a transfer sheet and enough time has elapsed after fixing, the sizes of the printed images are uniformly enlarged from their original sizes at a magnification of R on both the first side and the second side, and in both the main scanning direction and the sub-scanning direction, so that the images printed by all the printers used can be equal in size.*" column 14, lines 21-28).

Regarding claim 16; Oyumi '677 discloses wherein the printing units are each individual printers operatively coupled to the system processing unit ("*The host server 303 communicates with the printers 301 and 302 via the network 40, controls the operation of the printers 301 and 302, distributes images to the printers 301 and 302, and performs image processing.*" column 6, lines 40-43).

Regarding claim 17; Oyumi '677 discloses wherein the printing units are each print engines contained in a single printer ("*It is assumed that the other printer is substantially identical in construction and function with the illustrated printer. The image forming apparatus 300 is provided with a photosensitive drum (hereinafter referred to as "the photosensitive body")*

I as an image carrier. The photosensitive body 1 is rotated in the direction of an arrow A by a motor, not shown." column 6, lines 48-54).

Regarding claim 18; Oyumi '677 discloses wherein the printing units are each printheads contained in a single printer (*"The developing unit 13 is comprised of four developing devices 13Y, 13M, 13C, and 13K, which are intended for full-color development. The developing devices 13Y, 13M, 13C, and 13K develop latent images on the photosensitive body 1 using yellow (Y), magenta (M), cyan (C), and black (K) toners, respectively. To develop images using toners of the respective colors, the developing unit 13 is rotated in the direction of an arrow R by a motor, not shown, to be positioned such that the developing devices corresponding to the respective colors can be sequentially abutted on the photosensitive body 1."* column 6, lines 57-67).

Regarding claim 19; Oyumi '677 discloses a method of processing a print job including multiple images with a printing system including multiple printing units, comprising (*"It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an image forming system, an image distribution apparatus, and an image forming method that are capable of making uniform in size printed images, which should originally be the same in size, between transfer sheets on which the images have been printed by a plurality of printers having different functions and capabilities when enough time has elapsed after fixing..."* column 2, lines 17-24); identifying the number of printing units in the system, the system including at least a first printing unit and a second printing unit (*"FIG. 1 is a block diagram showing the arrangement of an image forming system according to a first embodiment of the present invention. In FIG. 1, reference numerals 301 and*

302 each denote a printer; 40, a network; and 303, a host server that controls the operation of the printers 301 and 302." column 6, lines 30-34); calculating a histogram for each image in the print job ("On the other hand, to create the density histogram data for the sub-scanning direction, as shown in FIG. 8B, the flip-flop 813 is initialized (cleared) in response to a reset signal RES2, and a read modify write operation is repeated for respective pixels constituting each line in the main scanning direction based on image data obtained from one mark image in response to a write signal RAMWR1 and data direction switching signal RAMDIR, and integration values of density data on respective pixels arranged on the same line in the sub-scanning direction are calculated and stored in the RAM 803." column 11, lines 12-23).

Oyumi '677 does not expressly disclose comparing the histograms of the images in the print job to determine similarity between the images; grouping the images into groups based on the similarity of the comparisons of the histograms; sorting the images in the groups into classes, including at least a first class and a second class; and sending the images to the printing units for printing, including sending the images from the first class to the first printing unit and sending the images from the second class to the second printing unit.

Enomoto '761 discloses comparing the histograms of the images in the print job to determine similarity between the images ("More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine

scan." column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5); grouping the images into groups based on the similarity of the comparisons of the histograms (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan.*" column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5); sorting the images in the groups into classes, including at least a first class and a second class (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan.*" column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5); and sending the images to the printing units for printing, including sending the images from the first class to the first printing unit and sending the images from the second class to the second printing unit (*"In the printing with film processing, the parameter integration subsection 76 transmits the image processing information of the frame of interest and the calculated image characteristic quantity and the like received from the setup subsection 70 to the recording means 78 after processing for the frame is determined.*" column 11, lines 30-35).

Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (*"The present invention relates to a technical field of a print system for outputting a print (photograph) on which an image photographed on a film [or an image photographed by a digital camera] is reproduced, and in particular, to a data retrieval method allowing an image on a print made on the occasion of film processing and that on a reprint to suitably match each other in such a print system."* Enomoto '761 at column 1, lines 6-12).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi '677 by adding comparing the histograms of the images in the print job to determine similarity between the images; grouping the images into groups based on the similarity of the comparisons of the histograms; sorting the images in the groups into classes, including at least a first class and a second class; and sending the images to the printing units for printing, including sending the images from the first class to the first printing unit and sending the images from the second class to the second printing unit as taught by Enomoto '761.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to provide a data retrieval method to enable the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint which meets the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image (*"...the present invention has an object of providing a data retrieval method enabling the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint meeting the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image processing-related data)*

related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image.” Enomoto ‘671 at column 3, lines 19-25).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi ‘677 with Enomoto ‘671 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 19.

Regarding claim 29; Oyumi ‘677 discloses a printing control system, comprising: a plurality of printing units (*“It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an image forming system, an image distribution apparatus, and an image forming method that are capable of making uniform in size printed images, which should originally be the same in size, between transfer sheets on which the images have been printed by a plurality of printers having different functions and capabilities when enough time has elapsed after fixing...”* column 2, lines 17-24); an image source providing a print job comprising a plurality of images (*“It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an image forming system, an image distribution apparatus, and an image forming method that are capable of making uniform in size printed images, which should originally be the same in size, between transfer sheets on which the images have been printed by a plurality of printers having different functions and capabilities when enough time has elapsed after fixing.”* column 2, lines 17-24); and processing means for receiving the plurality of images in the print job from the image source (*“FIG. 10 is a flow chart showing an image forming process carried out by the image forming system in FIG. 1, including processing for printing and reading mark images, and correcting the image size when printing original images based on integration data by respective printers...”* column 6, lines 1-5); for calculating an image histogram for each image in the print job (*“On the other hand, to create the density*

histogram data for the sub-scanning direction, as shown in FIG. 8B, the flip-flop 813 is initialized (cleared) in response to a reset signal RES2, and a read modify write operation is repeated for respective pixels constituting each line in the main scanning direction based on image data obtained from one mark image in response to a write signal RAMWRI and data direction switching signal RAMDIR, and integration values of density data on respective pixels arranged on the same line in the sub-scanning direction are calculated and stored in the RAM 803." column 11, lines 12-23).

Oyumi '677 does not expressly disclose comparing the calculated histograms and determining a similarity of the images in the print job; classifying the images into classes based on the comparison; and sending each of the classes of images to a respective one of the printing units.

Enomoto '761 discloses comparing the calculated histograms and determining a similarity of the images in the print job (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan."* column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5); classifying the images into classes based on the comparison (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean*

density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan.” column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5); sending each of the classes of images to a respective one of the printing units (“In the printing with film processing, the parameter integration subsection 76 transmits the image processing information of the frame of interest and the calculated image characteristic quantity and the like received from the setup subsection 70 to the recording means 78 after processing for the frame is determined.” column 11, lines 30-35).

Oyumi ‘677 and Enomoto ‘761 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (“*The present invention relates to a technical field of a print system for outputting a print (photograph) on which an image photographed on a film [or an image photographed by a digital camera] is reproduced, and in particular, to a data retrieval method allowing an image on a print made on the occasion of film processing and that on a reprint to suitably match each other in such a print system.*” Enomoto ‘761 at column 1, lines 6-12).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi ‘677 by adding comparing the calculated histograms and determining a similarity of the images in the print job; classifying the images into classes based on the comparison; and sending each of the classes of images to a respective one of the printing units as taught by Enomoto ‘761.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to provide a data retrieval method to enable the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint which meets the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image

processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image (*"...the present invention has an object of providing a data retrieval method enabling the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint meeting the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image."* Enomoto '761 at column 3, lines 19-25).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi '677 with Enomoto '761 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 29.

Regarding claim 31; Oyumi '677 discloses wherein the plurality of printing units includes at least a first printing unit and a second printing unit, wherein the number of classes equals the number of printing units and includes at least a first class and a second class, and wherein the first class of images is printed on the first printing unit and the second class of images is printed on the second printing unit (*"Then, before distributing image data on an original image to be printed by the printer n to the printer n, the host server 303 enlarges an image to be printed on the first side of the transfer sheet at a magnification of $R/RnH1$ in the main scanning direction and at a magnification of $R/RnV1$ in the sub-scanning direction, and enlarges an image to be printed on the second side of the transfer sheet at a magnification of $R/RnH2$ in the main scanning direction and at a magnification of $R/RnV2$ in the sub-scanning direction (step S1108). Then, the host server 303 distributes the enlarged image data to the respective printers, and the printers form the images onto transfer sheets (step S1109)." column 12, lines 43-54).*

3. **Claims 2, 14, 15, 20, 28, 30 & 39** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Enomoto '761.

Regarding claim 2; Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 does not expressly disclose wherein the system processing unit is adapted to compare the calculated histograms by calculating cross-correlation values between the images in the print job based on the histograms.

Enomoto '761 discloses wherein the system processing unit is adapted to compare the calculated histograms by calculating cross-correlation values between the images in the print job based on the histograms (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan."* column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5).

Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 are combinable with Enomoto '761 because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (*"The present invention relates to a technical field of a print system for outputting a print (photograph) on which an image photographed on a film [or an image photographed by a digital camera] is reproduced, and in particular, to a data retrieval method allowing an image on a print made on the occasion of film processing and that*

on a reprint to suitably match each other in such a print system.” Enomoto ‘761 at column 1, lines 6-12).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi ‘677 and Enomoto ‘761 by adding wherein the system processing unit is adapted to compare the calculated histograms by calculating cross-correlation values between the images in the print job based on the histograms as taught by Enomoto ‘761.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to provide a data retrieval method to enable the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint which meets the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image (“*...the present invention has an object of providing a data retrieval method enabling the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint meeting the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image.*” Enomoto ‘761 at column 3, lines 19-25).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi ‘677 and Enomoto ‘761 with Enomoto ‘761 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

Regarding claim 14; Enomoto ‘761 discloses wherein the system processing unit is adapted to classify the images based on the comparison of the calculated histograms by also forming final classes from the core classes by adding any remaining image members of the sets

to the core classes with which the sets are most similar (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan."* column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5).

Regarding claim 15; Enomoto '761 discloses wherein the system processing unit is adapted to determine which sets are most similar to which of the core classes by a progressive process wherein the number of image members in a core class increases each time a set is merged into one of the core classes (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan."* column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5).

Regarding claim 20; Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 does not expressly disclose wherein comparing the histograms of the images includes calculating cross-correlation values between the images in the print job based on the histograms.

Enomoto '761 discloses wherein comparing the histograms of the images includes calculating cross-correlation values between the images in the print job based on the histograms (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan."* column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5).

Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 are combinable with Enomoto '761 because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (*"The present invention relates to a technical field of a print system for outputting a print (photograph) on which an image photographed on a film [or an image photographed by a digital camera] is reproduced, and in particular, to a data retrieval method allowing an image on a print made on the occasion of film processing and that on a reprint to suitably match each other in such a print system."* Enomoto '761 at column 1, lines 6-12).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 by adding wherein comparing the histograms of the images includes calculating cross-correlation values between the images in the print job based on the histograms as taught by Enomoto '761.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to provide a data retrieval method to enable the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint which meets the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image

processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image (*"...the present invention has an object of providing a data retrieval method enabling the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint meeting the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image."* Enomoto '761 at column 3, lines 19-25).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 with Enomoto '761 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 19.

Regarding claim 28; Enomoto '761 discloses wherein sorting the images in the groups into classes further includes forming the classes from the core classes by adding any remaining image members of the sets to the core classes with which the sets are most similar (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan."* column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5).

Regarding claim 30; Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 does not expressly disclose wherein the processing means compares the calculated histograms by calculating cross-correlation values between the images in the print job based on the histograms.

Enomoto '761 discloses wherein the processing means compares the calculated histograms by calculating cross-correlation values between the images in the print job based on the histograms (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan."* column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5).

Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 are combinable with Enomoto '761 because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (*"The present invention relates to a technical field of a print system for outputting a print (photograph) on which an image photographed on a film [or an image photographed by a digital camera] is reproduced, and in particular, to a data retrieval method allowing an image on a print made on the occasion of film processing and that on a reprint to suitably match each other in such a print system."* Enomoto '761 at column 1, lines 6-12).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 by adding wherein the processing means compares the calculated histograms by calculating cross-correlation values between the images in the print job based on the histograms as taught by Enomoto '761.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to provide a data retrieval method to enable the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint which meets the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image (*"...the present invention has an object of providing a data retrieval method enabling the retrieval of image processing-related data suitable for producing a reprint meeting the requests of a customer even in the case where data (image processing-related data) related to a plurality of image processing operations are registered in a database for the same image."* Enomoto '761 at column 3, lines 19-25).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 with Enomoto '761 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 29.

Regarding claim 39; Enomoto '761 discloses wherein the processing means classifies the images based on the comparison of the calculated histograms by also forming final classes from the core classes by adding any remaining image members of the sets to the core classes with which the sets are most similar (*"More specifically, in the printing with film processing, from the prescan data, the setup subsection 70 produces a density histogram, calculates an image characteristic quantity such as a predetermined percentage point of frequency of a density histogram for a mean density, a highlight (minimum density) or a shadow (maximum density), LATD (Large Area Transmission Density), a maximum value density and a minimum value density of the histogram or the like so as to set the reading conditions for fine scan."* column 10, lines 63-67 thru column 11, lines 1-5).

4. **Claims 4-8, 12, 21-23, 27, 32-34 & 38** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Neubauer et al. (US 7,110,591 hereinafter, Neubauer '591).

Regarding claim 4; Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 does not expressly disclose wherein the cross-correlation values between the images in the print job are normalized and have a value of one of 0, 1, and between 0 and 1, wherein the value is 0 when the images are most dissimilar and is 1 when the images are most similar.

Neubauer '591 discloses wherein the cross-correlation values between the images in the print job are normalized and have a value of one of 0, 1, and between 0 and 1, wherein the value is 0 when the images are most dissimilar and is 1 when the images are most similar (*"Next, for each template image, a normalized correlation is computed with respect to the target image (step 67). In particular, a normalized correlation is computed with respect to brightness and contrast as follows: $\rho = \sum I(i) * T(i)$, where ρ denotes the correlation coefficient, I denotes the target image, T denotes the template, and where $\rho \in [-1, 1]$ (where 1 indicates perfect correlation and -1 indicates anti-correlation)." column 6, lines 15-29).*

Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 are combinable with Neubauer '591 because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (*"The present invention is generally related to a system and method for detecting markers on a PCB (printed circuit board) and, in particular, to a system and method for detecting markers on a PCB using an image processing technique based on histogram and template features.." Neubauer '591 at column 1, lines 8-12).*

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 by adding wherein the cross-correlation values between the images in the print job are normalized and have a value of one of 0, 1, and between 0 and 1, wherein the value is 0 when the images are most dissimilar and is 1 when the images are most similar as taught by Neubauer '591.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to provide increased recognition results (*"Preferably, at least one training image is generated for a "good" histogram class and a "bad" histogram class, although multiple histograms in each class would provide increased recognition results. The histograms are stored and indexed in a database (step 91)." Neubauer '591 at column 7, lines 31-34).*

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 with Neubauer '591 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

Regarding claim 5; Neubauer '591 discloses wherein the histogram for each image includes a multitude of bins each representing colors, and wherein calculating the cross-correlation values includes calculating a normalized summation of the product of each color bin for the multitude of bins (*"Next, for each template image, a normalized correlation is computed with respect to the target image (step 67). In particular, a normalized correlation is computed with respect to brightness and contrast as follows: $\rho = \sum I(i) * T(i)$, where ρ denotes the correlation coefficient, I denotes the target image, T denotes the template, and where $\rho \in [-1, 1]$ (where 1 indicates perfect correlation and -1 indicates anti-correlation)." column 6, lines 15-29).*

Regarding claim 6; Neubauer '591 discloses wherein the system processing unit is adapted to classify the images based on the comparison of the calculated histograms by forming a group for each of the images in the print job, and then adding other images to the group as image members of the group when the cross-correlation value between respective images is greater than a threshold value (*"Next, the requisite template(s) are retrieved from memory (step 63) depending on the implementation. For example, if a "cross" marker is being detected, the image processing system would retrieve the trained templates corresponding to such marker. In one embodiment (referred to herein as a "manual" process), the user specifies which class of templates (good or bad) to utilize for the recognition process. In this embodiment, as explained below, the target image is compared to each of the templates in the selected template class and the recognition results are determined based on the template having a maximum correlation coefficient above a predetermined threshold."* column 5, lines 18-29).

Regarding claim 7; Neubauer '591 discloses wherein the threshold value is between approximately 0.8 and approximately 0.95 (*"In another embodiment of the classification process (step 68), the user can choose between an "automatic" threshold determination and "manual" threshold determination. The manual threshold selection is preferably used when there are no available templates from both classes. Namely, if there are only "good" templates, then the user can select a threshold, which is slightly lower (about 10%) than the correlation coefficients within the "good" class. However, since this selection is rather arbitrary, it is preferred to gather samples from both classes and to use the automatic threshold selection."* column 6, lines 52-62).

Regarding claim 8; Neubauer '591 discloses wherein the system processing unit is adapted to classify the images based on the comparison of the calculated histograms by also forming subgroups from the groups by regrouping groups that have image members in common (*"Referring now to FIG. 9, a flow diagram illustrates a method for recognizing markers according to one aspect of the present invention using histogram-based marker recognition. Initially, prior to recognition, a training process is performed to train the marker recognition system (step 90). Training involves building one or more histograms for each pattern, wherein each histogram preferably comprises a gray value resolution of 32 (5 bits). Preferably, at least one training image is generated for a "good" histogram class and a "bad" histogram class, although multiple histograms in each class would provide increased recognition results. The histograms are stored and indexed in a database (step 91)."* column 7, lines 23-34).

Regarding claim 12; Neubauer '591 discloses wherein the system processing unit is adapted to classify the images based on the comparison of the calculated histograms by also forming core classes from the sets by selecting the sets with the greatest number of image members as the core classes (*"Next, the requisite template(s) are retrieved from memory (step 63) depending on the implementation. For example, if a "cross" marker is being detected, the image processing system would retrieve the trained templates corresponding to such marker. In one embodiment (referred to herein as a "manual" process), the user specifies which class of templates (good or bad) to utilize for the recognition process. In this embodiment, as explained below, the target image is compared to each of the templates in the selected template class and*

the recognition results are determined based on the template having a maximum correlation coefficient above a predetermined threshold.” column 5, lines 18-29).

Regarding claim 21; Oyumi ‘677 and Enomoto ‘761 does not expressly disclose wherein the histogram for each image includes a multitude of bins each representing colors, and wherein calculating the cross-correlation values includes calculating a normalized summation of the product of each color bin for the multitude of bins.

Neubauer ‘591 discloses wherein the histogram for each image includes a multitude of bins each representing colors, and wherein calculating the cross-correlation values includes calculating a normalized summation of the product of each color bin for the multitude of bins (*“Next, for each template image, a normalized correlation is computed with respect to the target image (step 67). In particular, a normalized correlation is computed with respect to brightness and contrast as follows: $\rho = \sum I(i) * T(i)$, where ρ denotes the correlation coefficient, I denotes the target image, T denotes the template, and where $\rho \in [-1, 1]$ (where 1 indicates perfect correlation and -1 indicates anti-correlation).” column 6, lines 15-29).*

Oyumi ‘677 and Enomoto ‘761 are combinable with Neubauer ‘591 because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (*“The present invention is generally related to a system and method for detecting markers on a PCB (printed circuit board) and, in particular, to a system and method for detecting markers on a PCB using an image processing technique based on histogram and template features..” Neubauer ‘591 at column 1, lines 8-12).*

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi ‘677 and Enomoto ‘761 by adding

wherein the histogram for each image includes a multitude of bins each representing colors, and wherein calculating the cross-correlation values includes calculating a normalized summation of the product of each color bin for the multitude of bins as taught by Neubauer '591.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to provide increased recognition results (*"Preferably, at least one training image is generated for a "good" histogram class and a "bad" histogram class, although multiple histograms in each class would provide increased recognition results. The histograms are stored and indexed in a database (step 91)." Neubauer '591 at column 7, lines 31-34).*

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 with Neubauer '591 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 19.

Regarding claim 22; Neubauer '591 discloses wherein grouping the images into groups includes forming a group for each of the images in the print job, and then adding other images to the group as image members of the group when the cross-correlation value between respective images is greater than a threshold value (*"Next, the requisite template(s) are retrieved from memory (step 63) depending on the implementation. For example, if a "cross" marker is being detected, the image processing system would retrieve the trained templates corresponding to such marker. In one embodiment (referred to herein as a "manual" process), the user specifies which class of templates (good or bad) to utilize for the recognition process. In this embodiment, as explained below, the target image is compared to each of the templates in the selected template class and the recognition results are determined based on the template having a maximum correlation coefficient above a predetermined threshold."* column 5, lines 18-29).

Regarding claim 23; Neubauer '591 discloses wherein sorting the images in the groups into classes includes forming subgroups from the groups by merging groups that have image members in common (*"Referring now to FIG. 9, a flow diagram illustrates a method for recognizing markers according to one aspect of the present invention using histogram-based marker recognition. Initially, prior to recognition, a training process is performed to train the marker recognition system (step 90). Training involves building one or more histograms for each pattern, wherein each histogram preferably comprises a gray value resolution of 32 (5 bits). Preferably, at least one training image is generated for a "good" histogram class and a "bad" histogram class, although multiple histograms in each class would provide increased recognition results. The histograms are stored and indexed in a database (step 91)."* column 7, lines 23-34).

Regarding claim 27; Neubauer '591 discloses wherein sorting the images in the groups into classes further includes forming core classes from the sets by selecting the sets with the greatest number of image members as the core classes (*"Next, the requisite template(s) are retrieved from memory (step 63) depending on the implementation. For example, if a "cross" marker is being detected, the image processing system would retrieve the trained templates corresponding to such marker. In one embodiment (referred to herein as a "manual" process), the user specifies which class of templates (good or bad) to utilize for the recognition process. In this embodiment, as explained below, the target image is compared to each of the templates in the selected template class and the recognition results are determined based on the template*

having a maximum correlation coefficient above a predetermined threshold.” column 5, lines 18-29).

Regarding claim 32; Oyumi ‘677 and Enomoto ‘761 does not expressly disclose wherein the histogram for each image includes a multitude of bins each representing colors, and wherein calculating the cross-correlation values includes calculating a normalized summation of the product of each color bin for the multitude of bins.

Neubauer ‘591 discloses wherein the histogram for each image includes a multitude of bins each representing colors, and wherein calculating the cross-correlation values includes calculating a normalized summation of the product of each color bin for the multitude of bins (*“Next, for each template image, a normalized correlation is computed with respect to the target image (step 67). In particular, a normalized correlation is computed with respect to brightness and contrast as follows: $\rho = \sum I(i) * T(i)$, where ρ denotes the correlation coefficient, I denotes the target image, T denotes the template, and where $\rho \in [-1, 1]$ (where 1 indicates perfect correlation and -1 indicates anti-correlation).”* column 6, lines 15-29).

Oyumi ‘677 and Enomoto ‘761 are combinable with Neubauer ‘591 because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (*“The present invention is generally related to a system and method for detecting markers on a PCB (printed circuit board) and, in particular, to a system and method for detecting markers on a PCB using an image processing technique based on histogram and template features..”* Neubauer ‘591 at column 1, lines 8-12).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi ‘677 and Enomoto ‘761 by adding

wherein the histogram for each image includes a multitude of bins each representing colors, and wherein calculating the cross-correlation values includes calculating a normalized summation of the product of each color bin for the multitude of bins as taught by Neubauer '591.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to provide increased recognition results (*"Preferably, at least one training image is generated for a "good" histogram class and a "bad" histogram class, although multiple histograms in each class would provide increased recognition results. The histograms are stored and indexed in a database (step 91)." Neubauer '591 at column 7, lines 31-34).*

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi '677 and Enomoto '761 with Neubauer '591 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 29.

Regarding claim 33; Neubauer '591 discloses wherein the processing means classifies the images based on the comparison of the calculated histograms by forming a group for each of the images in the print job, and then adding other images to the group as image members of the group when the cross-correlation value between respective images is greater than a threshold value (*"Next, the requisite template(s) are retrieved from memory (step 63) depending on the implementation. For example, if a "cross" marker is being detected, the image processing system would retrieve the trained templates corresponding to such marker. In one embodiment (referred to herein as a "manual" process), the user specifies which class of templates (good or bad) to utilize for the recognition process. In this embodiment, as explained below, the target image is compared to each of the templates in the selected template class and the recognition results are*

determined based on the template having a maximum correlation coefficient above a predetermined threshold.” column 5, lines 18-29).

Regarding claim 34; Neubauer ‘591 discloses wherein the processing means classifies the images based on the comparison of the calculated histograms by also forming subgroups from the groups by regrouping groups that have image members in common (*“Referring now to FIG. 9, a flow diagram illustrates a method for recognizing markers according to one aspect of the present invention using histogram-based marker recognition. Initially, prior to recognition, a training process is performed to train the marker recognition system (step 90). Training involves building one or more histograms for each pattern, wherein each histogram preferably comprises a gray value resolution of 32 (5 bits). Preferably, at least one training image is generated for a "good" histogram class and a "bad" histogram class, although multiple histograms in each class would provide increased recognition results. The histograms are stored and indexed in a database (step 91).”* column 7, lines 23-34).

Regarding claim 38; Neubauer ‘591 discloses wherein the processing means classifies the images based on the comparison of the calculated histograms by also forming core classes from the sets by selecting the sets with the greatest number of image members as the core classes (*“Next, the requisite template(s) are retrieved from memory (step 63) depending on the implementation. For example, if a "cross" marker is being detected, the image processing system would retrieve the trained templates corresponding to such marker. In one embodiment (referred to herein as a "manual" process), the user specifies which class of templates (good or bad) to*

utilize for the recognition process. In this embodiment, as explained below, the target image is compared to each of the templates in the selected template class and the recognition results are determined based on the template having a maximum correlation coefficient above a predetermined threshold.” column 5, lines 18-29).

5. **Claims 9-11, 24-26 & 35-37** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oyumi ‘677, Enomoto ‘761 & Neubauer ‘591 as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Sterns (US 6,714,677 hereinafter, Sterns ‘677).

Regarding claim 9; Oyumi ‘677, Enomoto ‘761 & Neubauer ‘591 does not expressly disclose wherein the system processing unit is adapted to merge groups that have at least half of the image members in common into subgroups.

Sterns ‘677 discloses wherein the system processing unit is adapted to merge groups that have at least half of the image members in common into subgroups (“*Consistent with the principles of the present invention, a method of decoding a plurality of glyphs is provided comprising the steps of: capturing an image of a group of glyphs to form image data for each glyph location; assigning for each location a first value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a first state; assigning for each location a second value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a second state; determining the difference between the first and second values for each potential glyph location; and decoding the plurality of glyphs based at least in part upon a distribution analysis of the determined differences.*” column 1, lines 66-67 thru column 2, lines 1-10).

Oyumi '677, Enomoto '761 & Neubauer '591 and Sterns '677 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (*"For example, in FIG. 1 there are shown histograms of the correlation differences from three images taken of the same printed glyph patch."* Sterns '677 at column 3, lines 2-4).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi '677, Enomoto '761 & Neubauer '591 by adding wherein the system processing unit is adapted to merge groups that have at least half of the image members in common into subgroups as taught by Sterns '677.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to improve the selection of a threshold so as to maximize correct categorization (*"The present invention is directed toward improving the selection of a threshold so as to maximize correct categorization while minimizing the number of glyphs erroneously decoded."* Sterns '677 at column 5, lines 1-2).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi '677, Enomoto '761 & Neubauer '591 with Sterns '677 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

Regarding claim 10; Sterns '677 discloses wherein the system processing unit is adapted to regroup image members from groups having less than half of the image members in common into subgroups by computing an average cross-correlation value of each image member of the groups with each group to determine the group to which the image member belongs (*"More specifically, the step of assigning preferably includes performing cross-correlations for each location with first and second correlation kernels representing the first and second states of the*

glyphs. *In this case the step of decoding preferably includes establishing a threshold value for the minimum determined difference indicative of unambiguous decoding of a glyph state.*" column 2, lines 10-16).

Regarding claim 11; Sterns '677 discloses wherein the system processing unit is adapted to classify the images based on the comparison of the calculated histograms by also forming sets from the subgroups by merging subgroups that have similar image members (*"Consistent with the principles of the present invention, a method of decoding a plurality of glyphs is provided comprising the steps of: capturing an image of a group of glyphs to form image data for each glyph location; assigning for each location a first value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a first state; assigning for each location a second value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a second state; determining the difference between the first and second values for each potential glyph location; and decoding the plurality of glyphs based at least in part upon a distribution analysis of the determined differences."* column 1, lines 66-67 thru column 2, lines 1-10).

Regarding claim 24; Oyumi '677, Enomoto '761 & Neubauer '591 does not expressly disclose wherein forming subgroups from the groups includes merging into respective subgroups groups that have at least half of the image members in common.

Sterns '677 discloses wherein forming subgroups from the groups includes merging into respective subgroups groups that have at least half of the image members in common (*"Consistent with the principles of the present invention, a method of decoding a plurality of*

glyphs is provided comprising the steps of: capturing an image of a group of glyphs to form image data for each glyph location; assigning for each location a first value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a first state; assigning for each location a second value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a second state; determining the difference between the first and second values for each potential glyph location; and decoding the plurality of glyphs based at least in part upon a distribution analysis of the determined differences.” column 1, lines 66-67 thru column 2, lines 1-10).

Oyumi ‘677, Enomoto ‘761 & Neubauer ‘591 and Sterns ‘677 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (“*For example, in FIG. 1 there are shown histograms of the correlation differences from three images taken of the same printed glyph patch.*” Sterns ‘677 at column 3, lines 2-4).

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi ‘677, Enomoto ‘761 & Neubauer ‘591 by adding wherein forming subgroups from the groups includes merging into respective subgroups groups that have at least half of the image members in common as taught by Sterns ‘677.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to improve the selection of a threshold so as to maximize correct categorization (“*The present invention is directed toward improving the selection of a threshold so as to maximize correct categorization while minimizing the number of glyphs erroneously decoded.*” Sterns ‘677 at column 5, lines 1-2).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi '677, Enomoto '761 & Neubauer '591 with Sterns '677 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 19.

Regarding claim 25; Sterns '677 discloses wherein forming subgroups from the groups includes sorting into respective subgroups image members from groups that have less than half of the image members in common by computing an average cross-correlation value of each image member of the groups with each group to determine the group to which the image member belongs (*"More specifically, the step of assigning preferably includes performing cross-correlations for each location with first and second correlation kernels representing the first and second states of the glyphs. In this case the step of decoding preferably includes establishing a threshold value for the minimum determined difference indicative of unambiguous decoding of a glyph state."* column 2, lines 10-16).

Regarding claim 26; Sterns '677 discloses wherein sorting the images in the groups into classes further includes forming sets from the subgroups by merging subgroups that have similar image members (*"Consistent with the principles of the present invention, a method of decoding a plurality of glyphs is provided comprising the steps of: capturing an image of a group of glyphs to form image data for each glyph location; assigning for each location a first value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a first state; assigning for each location a second value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a second state; determining the difference between the first and second values for each potential glyph location; and*

decoding the plurality of glyphs based at least in part upon a distribution analysis of the determined differences.” column 1, lines 66-67 thru column 2, lines 1-10).

Regarding claim 35; Oyumi ‘677, Enomoto ‘761 & Neubauer ‘591 does not expressly disclose wherein the processing means merges groups that have at least half of the image members in common into subgroups.

Sterns ‘677 discloses wherein the processing means merges groups that have at least half of the image members in common into subgroups (*“Consistent with the principles of the present invention, a method of decoding a plurality of glyphs is provided comprising the steps of: capturing an image of a group of glyphs to form image data for each glyph location; assigning for each location a first value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a first state; assigning for each location a second value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a second state; determining the difference between the first and second values for each potential glyph location; and decoding the plurality of glyphs based at least in part upon a distribution analysis of the determined differences.” column 1, lines 66-67 thru column 2, lines 1-10).*

Oyumi ‘677, Enomoto ‘761 & Neubauer ‘591 and Sterns ‘677 are combinable because they are from same field of endeavor of printer systems (*“For example, in FIG. 1 there are shown histograms of the correlation differences from three images taken of the same printed glyph patch.” Sterns ‘677 at column 3, lines 2-4).*

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the printer system as taught by Oyumi ‘677, Enomoto ‘761 & Neubauer ‘591

by adding wherein the processing means merges groups that have at least half of the image members in common into subgroups as taught by Sterns '677.

The motivation for doing so would have been because it is advantageous to improve the selection of a threshold so as to maximize correct categorization (*"The present invention is directed toward improving the selection of a threshold so as to maximize correct categorization while minimizing the number of glyphs erroneously decoded."* Sterns '677 at column 5, lines 1-2).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Oyumi '677, Enomoto '761 & Neubauer '591 with Sterns '677 to obtain the invention as specified in claim 19.

Regarding claim 36; Sterns '677 discloses wherein the processing means regroups image members from groups having less than half of the image members in common into subgroups by computing an average cross-correlation value of each image member of the groups with each group to determine the group to which the image member belongs (*"More specifically, the step of assigning preferably includes performing cross-correlations for each location with first and second correlation kernels representing the first and second states of the glyphs. In this case the step of decoding preferably includes establishing a threshold value for the minimum determined difference indicative of unambiguous decoding of a glyph state."* column 2, lines 10-16).

Regarding claim 37; Sterns '677 discloses wherein the processing means classifies the images based on the comparison of the calculated histograms by also forming sets from the subgroups by merging subgroups that have similar image members (*"Consistent with the*

principles of the present invention, a method of decoding a plurality of glyphs is provided comprising the steps of: capturing an image of a group of glyphs to form image data for each glyph location; assigning for each location a first value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a first state; assigning for each location a second value indicative of the likelihood that location contains a glyph in a second state; determining the difference between the first and second values for each potential glyph location; and decoding the plurality of glyphs based at least in part upon a distribution analysis of the determined differences.” column 1, lines 66-67 thru column 2, lines 1-10).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MARCUS T. RILEY whose telephone number is (571)270-1581. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 7:30-5:00, est.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Twyler L. Haskins can be reached on 571-272-7406. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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